

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



07 November 2006

Mrs T Darlow
Headteacher
Chingford C of E Voluntary Controlled
Infant School
King's Road
London
E4 7EY

Dear Mrs Darlow

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 31 October 2006 to look at work in ESD. The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with pupils and staff, scrutiny of relevant documents and observation of six lessons.

The overall effectiveness of Education for Sustainable Development was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ESD are satisfactory overall.

- Pupils have a basic awareness of many environmental issues, such as recycling paper rather than cutting down trees or keeping the local environment attractive by not dropping litter.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthy foods and taking exercise. Pupils happily eat “little trees” (broccoli) and other vegetables and fruit. The school attained the Healthy School standards in December 2005.
- Through ‘Philosophy for Children’, pupils debate ESD issues which relate to local and global topics.

- The school's teaching about other cultures and its enthusiastic fund raising for charities help pupils to be aware of others who are less fortunate, both in the local area and overseas.

Quality of teaching and learning of ESD

Teaching and learning in ESD are good overall.

- Teachers are developing an understanding of how they can link elements of the curriculum through ESD. For example, studying light in science in Year 1, the teacher made a helpful reference to Diwali candles which pupils had talked about a few weeks before.
- The school's focus on sport is strong and the support of Year 6 pupils from the Junior school is valuable.
- In an imaginative Reception lesson, pupils studied photographs of things they had noticed during a walk in the local area. Their discussion included transport and how to recycle televisions and one pupil observed "We need to care for our planet".
- A 'Philosophy for Children' lesson was most effective in getting pupils to consider what should be done about junk mail. In a science lesson, pupils enjoyed creating television advertisements about the health properties of various foods. Their learning was good.
- Teachers take pride in creating vibrant displays around the school, several of which refer to ESD elements, for example recycling or understanding other cultures and faiths.
- The visit by school council members to another primary school is an imaginative and effective way of developing understanding of differences within the local community.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum for ESD is good overall.

- The curriculum is rich in ESD elements, particularly in personal, social and health education, and especially in the Foundation stage. Pupils in Reception discuss serious issues confidently.
- The school uses its local environment very well and pupils go out on many visits which have a strong ESD content. These venues include forests, a nature reserve, a recycling centre and the seaside.
- Visitors to the school, such as a conservationist or Indian dancers, contribute to ESD. Photographs of owls flying about the school hall show that pupils had thoroughly enjoyed learning about owls' habitats! The Caribbean steel band which worked with pupils during the day of the visit not only supported pupils' understanding of other cultures and but also made them realise that recycled materials can become useful instruments.
- The allotment in the playground is used for a gardening club and for delivering the curriculum but some teachers use it more effectively than others.

Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD is satisfactory.

- You are keen to develop ESD within the school's ethos and to support teachers to understand its importance.
- No member of staff has a particular responsibility for ESD so there is not a co-ordinated approach to provision.
- The school is already registered with Eco schools and is now ready to submit an application for the Bronze Award.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good overall.

- The Every Child Matters agenda has a high profile in the school and pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel safe and are happy there.
- Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated and welcomed.
- Through the school council pupils know they can voice their opinions and ideas. The school council has started to consider sustainability issues in school, for example it requested push taps be installed to save water. It has yet to consider sustainability in the local area.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- support those teachers who have an interest in ESD to take a more active role in its implementation and to raise awareness in all staff
- develop the allotment area in the playground so that all pupils benefit from first hand experience of growing things
- encourage the school council to consider environmental issues in the local community
- encourage staff and pupils to further develop ESD links between different subjects.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop Education for Sustainable Development in the school. A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Clare Gillies
Additional Inspector